ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A retrieving portion compares a header information of a received packet with packet header ~~patters~~ patterns entered in look-up table of a discarding priority information memorizing portion. The retrieving portion supplies priority information read out from the look-up table on the basis of the comparison result. A discarding priority information adding portion 12 gives high priority to the received packet according to the priority information supplied from the retrieving portion. The discarding priority information adding portion queues the received packet in one of queues. When the number of packets reaches a threshold in each of queues, a collective discarding processing portion collectively discards packets having the high priority.